

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee  
Thursday, March 12, 2015  
SB 898: An Act Concerning Professional Doctoral Degree Programs

Committee Members,

My name is Terri Williams CRNA. I am a graduate of Central Connecticut State University with a Master of Science in Biology: Anesthesia and I speak in favor of **SB 898: An Act Concerning Professional Doctoral Degree Programs**.

I am a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA) and Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) employed full-time by Integrated Anesthesia Associates (IAA) as the Assistant Program Director for the Nurse Anesthesia Program of Hartford (NAPH). I work clinically at Hartford Hospital as a CRNA and I teach Student Registered Nurse Anesthetists (SRNAs) clinically and didactically.

I am writing to encourage your support in the establishment of a doctoral program through the state university system for nurse anesthesia entry into practice. Currently, Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) has a Master of Science in Biology: Anesthesia (MS) program that educates accepted Registered Nurses (RN) with a minimum of 1 year of intensive care unit (ICU) experience in the foundational sciences. This intensive year-long didactic program is followed by 17 months of anesthesia clinical experience. Three nurse anesthesia programs share CCSU for the didactic portion before moving to their respective clinical affiliations which includes the Nurse Anesthesia Program of Hartford, Yale New Haven Hospital School of Nurse Anesthesia, and Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island School of Nurse Anesthesia. These programs are accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) of Nurse Anesthesia programs. Upon successful completion of one of these three anesthesia programs, the SRNA is eligible to take a national certification examination (NCE). After passing the NCE, we have a CRNA who is eligible to apply to the Connecticut State Board of Nursing for their advanced practice license (APRN).

CCSU has provided nurse anesthesia education beginning in the 1980s as a certificate in anesthesia. In the mid-1980s, CCSU offered a Master's Degree option that became a requirement for graduation in the late 1980s. CCSU is in a unique position to continue to offer an outstanding and affordable anesthesia education at the doctoral level for nurse anesthetists.

Nationally all APRN programs will require a practice doctoral degree for entry into practice beginning in the year 2025. An anesthesia program must be able to admit their first class no later than 2022 to meet this requirement since a doctoral program will take a minimum of 3 years to complete.

The IOM report TO ERR IS HUMAN: BUILDING A SAFER HEALTH SYSTEM in November of 1999 encourages the provision of services in a manner consistent with current medical knowledge and evidenced based practices. Synthesizing and interpreting the findings in the literature pertaining to evidenced based practice is a

complicated process but can enhance patient safety and outcomes. The objective of a doctoral in nurse anesthesia practice program is to improve patient outcomes. This degree is about doing what is best for our patients not changing our scope of practice.

- Promote patient safety and improve nurse anesthesia practice
- Analyze scientific literature and apply evidenced-based practice
- Communicate effectively with patients, families, the public, and other health care providers
- Employ teaching and learning principles to better teach SRNAs and our patients

The ability for Central Connecticut State University to continue to educate nurse anesthetists and to offer a practice doctorate (Doctor of Nurse Anesthesia Practice) will provide well-educated, qualified anesthesia providers to serve the patients of Connecticut.

Thank you for your attention. I am happy to answer any questions.